

*Procedure and Organization*

There seems to be some measure of agreement that the continuation of the debate would not be a useful exercise. In addition it is the view of the government that it would be in the best interest both of arrangements for planning the business of the next session, and of members themselves, and indeed in the interest of the house staff that the house should adjourn for this part of the session. But the government also feels some progress in achieving a procedure for programming house business should be the result of the past two weeks' debate even if it is not possible at this point to incorporate in the rules the changes which I have proposed and which have not been accepted.

In our view, if it is desirable to make amendments to the proposed standing orders in the future, these could be brought forward at a later date. In the meantime we feel that the house should move ahead and take a decision on the third report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization.

It is for this purpose, Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice, pursuant to Standing Order 33, that at the next sitting of the house—

**Some hon. Members:** Shame, shame!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):**—immediately before the order of the day is called for resuming the debate on the motion, "That the third report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization be concurred in", and on any amendment or amendment in amendment proposed thereto, I will move that the said debate shall not be further adjourned.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):** We hope in this way, Mr. Speaker, to be able to bring the debate to an end and to have some opportunity to reflect on the Standing Orders. As I have said, if it be considered desirable at a later time to amend the Standing Orders, we would then have an opportunity to do so.

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald), realizing that the very reasonable alternative proposals advanced on this side of the house were going to be rejected, prepared what he was going to say today, as was his right.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Mr. Baldwin:** It is a great pity, Mr. Speaker, that these negotiations were not brought into the forum where they should have been conducted at an earlier stage in this session, the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization, so that there would have been an opportunity for the flow back and forth of arguments of reasonable men to have reached a culmination, to be brought into the house by the committee as the accepted co-operative effort of all parties, and not in the bulldozing works of a government that wants to ride rampant over members of parliament.

Having listened to the proposals advanced by the President of the Privy Council we advanced our alternative suggestions, which were consistent with the position that this party has taken from the very inception of this debate, which can trace its beginning back to last December and proposed standing order 16A. We have said this is neither proper nor advisable in a legislative body. Pre-determined periods for debate should not be set for important issues concerning the country. This has been our position throughout.

We in the Official Opposition have said to the government, and the leader of our party made this abundantly clear in this debate, inside and outside of this house, that proposed standing orders 75A and 75B, and a revision of the present Standing Order 33 dealing with closure, could be adapted to meet the changed circumstances of the report stage which was introduced during the course of the debate on rules last year. That was a very sensible and reasonable idea. As I say it was advanced inside and outside this house. The government rejected it then, and are still rejecting it.

• (5:10 p.m.)

We were prepared to go further and make additional concessions. In the first instance we said there must be a limitation as to the minimum amount of time for the over-all period which is available for discussion in calendar days from the inception of a debate, from second reading until the question is put on third reading. This is of the essence. It is the pith and substance of a determined opposition which has the right to see that the country is advised of measures which, in our view, are not acceptable, so that public opinion can be gathered together throughout the land, which in turn can bring pressure on the government. So, we have set a minimum of 30 days.

**Mr. Pepin:**—reaching for the moon.